NEERS Fall 2017 Business meeting

Held at CERF 2017 in Providence, RI on November 6, 2017

* President’s report from Sara Grady
  + Sara welcomes everyone to the conference and thanks the many people in the room who contributed to CERF 2017. She then also introduces “Team NEERS,” which is the Executive Committee.
  + We need a student representative, if you would be willing to serve in the role, please get in touch with Sara. Ideally, the student will be able to serve for a couple of years.
  + The Communications Committee and Awards Committee are also part of “Team NEERs.”
  + There is an affiliate table in the lobby of the convention center (at this meeting). We now have official NEERs swag, after many years of discussion. These items will also be available for purchase at future meetings.
  + The Spring Meeting will be in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, from April 26-28, 2018. It will be a joint NEERS/NERRS meeting. Thursday will be an all-day salt marsh symposium. The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Harborside, right in downtown Portsmouth.
  + Sara gives a brief overview of the CERF Governing Board report. She mentions Visions IV and an Implementation Plan. Overall there are 107 action items. Sara suggests that we consider volunteering to help CERF as there are many different, smaller roles that need to be filled. There are plenty of places for individuals to help out.
  + All of the affiliates are doing a 2 year trial of Wild Apricot.
  + There will be regional workshops coming from CERF, which the board and committees are still working on ideas for. There is some suggestion of a big AERS/NEERS meeting on Long Island.
  + The next two upcoming CERF meetings will be in Mobile, Alabama in 2019 and in Richmond, Virginia in 2021.
  + At the Spring 2017 NEERS Meeting we discussed the need for a policy statement. This need is still as relevant, if not more relevant. Stay tuned.
  + In response to a question from the audience, Sara responded that there typically isn’t a Stickleback Award given out at CERF conferences.
* Treasurers report from Courtney Schmidt
  + As of November 2, 2017, our NEERS checking account is at $14,471 and the CD is $20,243. The Student Endowment CD is at $32,274 (plus $5 from everyone’s 2017 dues and endowment donations and the savings account contains $18,857).
    - These totals do not include the investments that were made into NEERS gear, which have for sale at this conference and will continue to sell at future meetings.
  + Thank you to our Spring 2017 sponsors: Dominion, CIRCA, Xylem/YSI, WHOI Sea Grant, RPS ASA, Stantec, Normandeau, CT Sea Grant, and CERF.
  + Overall, we profited $1,846.03 from the Spring 2017 NEERS Meeting. There were 98 meeting registrants, with 65 members, 21 students, and 12 non-members.
* Also presented by C. Schmidt: The Boston Malcological Society, based at Harvard, approached us about supporting a student award. Starting in the Spring of 2018, they will be offering us up to $500 for meetings. However, there are a few stipulations. The first is that the student must be a permanent resident of Massachusetts. The awards can support either undergraduates or graduate students and there will be no presentation requirement. Students can be a resident of Massachusetts while being a student in a different state. This could be a good opportunity for undergraduates at smaller schools like Salem State. The society will handle all of the finances, we would just have to send them the names of the students. Also, there are no requirements for topics that the students would present on. They did mention that George Buckley was one of the founding members of the Society and he had many good things to say about NEERS and CERF and he was very appreciative of the opportunities that these organizations provided him. Courtney believes that this is a great opportunity but she also wanted to make sure that NEERS members feel comfortable with the Massachusetts residency stipulation.
  + - Someone pointed out that the Malcological Society will be at the Boston SeaRovers show in Danvers if anyone wanted to check them out.
    - Peg Pelletier asked if these awards would free up some travel award money for non-Massachusetts resident students and Courtney was able to confirm that yes, it would.
    - Sandy MacFarlane pointed out that we would we have to add a category for permanent address to the student travel award applications. Courtney agreed that yes, we would, but we would not follow up more than that.
    - This group makes some money from selling shells and Fred Short asked if they were harvesting live animals? The board was able to confirm that no, someone had bequeathed the society a large shell collection and that they generate their profit by slowly selling them off. They also get periodic donations.
    - Walter Berry asked if this was a long term commitment. Courtney said that it was but that they wanted to begin on a trial basis. They anticipate trying to provide $500 for each meeting, including CERF Conferences. All of the meeting attendees seemed to think that this was a good idea.
  + The Treasurers report is supposed to be audited before it’s approved. We need it to be audited, but who does the auditing? We don’t know.
  + The Treasurers report was approved.
* Jamie Vaudrey also noted that it seems that NEERS is underfunding student travel and the executive board and awards committee will look at how much the other affiliates supply to see if we should increase award amount. It was suggested that we also look at, and consider, registration costs. Most of the other affiliates have far less money but give out more and bigger awards.
* Secretary’s Report, given by Autumn Oczkowski
  + Minutes from the NEERS Spring 2017 meeting at Avery Point were approved.
* Webmaster’s Report.
  + Jamie Vaudrey asked for a new co-webmaster to work with Brett Branco as well as a volunteer to help with the newsletter. Brett Branco has been helping Sara Grady with the newsletter, but the team could use another hand. It is difficult for just two people to collect all of the information. Sara really liked the day in the life entry, so if someone else wants to volunteer to do one, that would be well received.
* Awards Committee Report.
  + Jamie Vaudrey said that they would welcome additional members on the Awards Committee, which currently consists of Steve Hale, Sandy MacFarlane, and Veronica Berounsky.
* ACESS members attended the NEERS Business Meeting. Bruce Hatcher, the president of ACESS said that they were getting ready for their spring meeting. their meeting is in the end of May (May 24-26, 2018), at Memorial University in Saint Johns. They would like to host or work together to develop some joint workshops. They would like to ask for money to fund these joint workshops from the CERF Governing Board, and maybe even some funds to support student exchanges. Bruce wants to pursue these ideas in the future, with Sara Grady and Susan Park. He thanked NEERS for having ACESS at our meeting and invited us to visit.
  + Sandy MacFarlane mentioned that the Gulf of Maine is heating up as one the fastest places on the planet and she said that it’s a bi-country challenge. She asked if there was any collaboration between the two countries on this and, if not, whether this wasn’t a good opportunity to do it. Bruce agreed and suggested that we wouldn’t/shouldn’t have a problem looking at these issues along a latitudinal gradient.
* Walter Berry, from the floor, wanted to say that he was proud of all of the people who have pitched in to help with the CERF 2017 meeting. Sara Grady followed up on his comment by asking us to continue to be good ambassadors to the other CERF members.